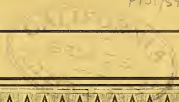


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SUTRO HEIGHTS.



A DESCRIPTIVE POEM.

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AUTUMNAL SUNSET.



SUTRO HEIGHTS.



A DESCRIPTIVE POEM.

E. J. Jackson



SAN FRANCISCO:

JOSEPH WINTERBURN & CO., PRINTERS AND ELECTROTYPERS, 417 CLAY STREET.

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TO THE READER.

These verses were written by one who had ample opportunity to glean the opinions of numerous visitors to Sutro Heights.

They are simply a reflex of those opinions, and of the sentiments he has heard repeatedly expressed.

They claim their origin in no divine afflatus—they are merely descriptive, and, therefore, it is hoped that they may prove intelligible and interesting to all.

THE AUTHOR.

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Autumnal Sunset.



SUTRO HEIGHTS.

From Western skies athwart the gleaming bay,
Refulgent shines the setting orb of day,
On argosies that pass the Golden Gate,
O'er rock and mountain of our favored State.

In the far distance, rising bright and clear
From ocean's blue, the Farallones appear,
And islets sparkle in the golden sheen,
Reflecting back the brilliant rays serene,
And venturous fishing boats far out at sea
Skim the translucent waters light and free,

Or nearer shore, where from uprising rock
 The wondrous sea-lions unnumbered flock,
 Whose ceaseless roar, heard in the gloom of night,
 When fog, and darkness deep, obscure the light,
 Warns the daz'd mariner of danger near,
 And bids him from the hidden rocks to steer.

Squads of these monsters, detail'd for the work,
 Patrol the deep, or close in ambush lurk;
 At once they move upon their finny prey,
 In shoals they drive them to the coast and bay.

Up steep acclivity, and fissur'd crag,
 Their ponderous weight the seals but slowly drag,
 Their hold to keep, they strive with all their might,
 And loudly roaring, with each other fight,
 'Till one, victorious, hurls its vanquish' foe
 Headlong into the troubled waves below.

Wise is the law, and good in its effect,
 Which for its purpose does these seals protect,
 But sordid spirits would this law arraign

And urge, the sea-lions should all be slain!
 Not so the public—they delight to see
 The seals preserved in their integrity.

If grizzly bears our mountain passes keep,
 Sea-lions guard an entrance from the deep,
 Their vigilance unbroken e'en by sleep. }

Where once but barren sand-hills met the eyes,
 Behold a modern Eden now arise!
 Above the ocean, bath'd in mellow lights
 Of Autumn's sunset, are the Sutro Heights;
 The glorious plateau to the sea extends,
 And to the view a charming prospect lends;

Nature and Art with lavish hand combine
 Their varied treasures in the great design—
 Here both Intelligence and Skill join hands,
 With wealth, and all the power that wealth commands,
 And glorious climate, which in splendor vies
 With aught that's found beneath Italia's skies,

Whilst here the winds which sweep the depths below,
 In Zephyrs light, and gentle breezes blow,
 And Nature revels in congenial glow.

Visions of beauty, greet the admiring guest,
 And sights, on which his eye delights to rest
 Hieing from tree to shrub, from shrub to flower,
 Entranc'd, he deems him in enchanted bower,
 Or wandering, as in dreams, in Fairyland,
 Or fain would fancy him on tropic strand.

No threat'ning angel with a flaming sword,
 But couchant lions, guard the portals broad,
 Where crowds press through, to feast their wondering
 eyes,
 On what to them appears a Paradise.

Parterres of lovely flowers gem the ground,
 Diffusing fragrance to the air around,
 And many-scented shrubs their perfume blend;
 To harmony the various colors tend.

Odors divine, from 'Araby the Blest'
If breath'd, could scarce more please the happy guest.
Gay butterflies amid the blossoms play,
And brilliant humming-birds their hues display.

The hum of insect life pervades the air,
Wails the sea-lion in his rocky lair,
And gently sighs the wind through forest trees,
Whose leaves scarce tremble in the ev'ning breeze,
The ever-sounding surge of Ocean's roar,
Is heard, but faintly, from the further shore.

Bevies of mountain quail with whirring sound,
In sudden flight shoot upward from the ground,
Unharm'd and cared for, on the lawns they feed,
And in the tangl'd copse or covert breed.

Across the path from yonder thicket springs
A timid rabbit—in the distance rings
The oriole's plain note, so strong and sweet,
Warbling to mate from out its cool retreat.

Here would one gladly spend some fleeting hours,
 Dreaming the time away in shady bowers,
 Forgetful of the outer world and care,
 Bewitched by glamour of a scene so fair.

A noble avenue divides the land,
 Where verdant palm trees grow on either hand;
 From thence, broad gravel walks and lanes diverge,
 And all, from devious ways at length emerge;
 Exotics bloom, and plants of rarest sort
 Hither from all parts of the world are brought.

Under umbrageous boughs the tale is told,
 To blushing maiden by her lover bold,
 For true it is, what poet sang of love,
 It "rules the court, the camp, the grove,
 And men below and saints above."

Who has not read of Rosamond the fair,
 Who by an English king was kept with care,
 In the historic maze at Woodstock Court,
 And her sad fate? Here have we such a sort

Of labyrinthian walk, mid clust'ring trees,
 A maze from which the guest no outlet sees;
 Seeking his way he vainly circles round,
 The gate by which he enter'd is not found;
 No silken thread his previous tracks betray,
 Hence long he wanders, hopelessly astray.

Mythology, presents an ample store,
 Of statues rare, replete with classic lore,
 And many a bust, commemorates the dead,
 Of men heroic, who for country bled;
 And gods and goddesses and nymphs and fawns,
 Adorn the paths, the woods, and lawns.

See where fam'd Milo's Venus stands, a sign
 And model, of the human form divine;
 Or where she treads across the flowery path,
 Coming unheeded from her morning bath;
 Or where blind Cupid strikes the goddess frail,
 (Whose loves occasioned many a wicked tale.)

Canova's Hebe, in whose form we trace
 Voluptuous figure, and angelic face,
 With cup in hand she serves the sparkling wine.
 Nectar! the only drink for gods sublime.

Lovely Diana, goddess of the chase,
 With fawn in hand, stands ready for the race;
 Or where she robes herself in mossy glen,
 Attractive sight, entrancing gods and men,
 While the Three Graces with their hands entwined,
 Perfection show, of body and of mind.

From female loveliness, now let us turn,
 To man's depicted form, more strong and stern:
 Yon Gladiator stands with arms uprear'd,
 As in Rome's fam'd arena he appear'd,
 Ready to battle with wild beast or man,
 Reckless of life, and life's embitter'd span.

Prometheus, who stole the sacred fire,
 And thus incurr'd great Jove's relentless ire,

Chain'd for his sin to adamantine rock,
Him, the offended gods derisive mock.

Belov'd of Venus, here Adonis find,
But him, by deeds of love, she ne'er could bind;
As far beyond her lures, the boy would rove,
She, to a flower, changed her former love.

Supine, a sylvan monster lies asleep,
Lascivious dreams disturbing slumbers deep;
Half man, half goat, the curious Satyr see,
Which heathen mortals deem'd a deity.

And here a rampant griffin,—fearful thing!
Lion and eagle, with extended wing,
Whilst in the bosky woods and forest near,
Are seen the noble elk, and timid deer.

Musician, poet, author, sage,
The busts of learned men of every age,
Peep from luxuriant foliage green,
And on the parapet and esplanade are seen;

Thither, through ancient grove, we musing stray,
Encountering many pleasures on the way.

Advancing on the parapet, the eye,
May, from this point, a noble scene descry.

The grand Pacific Ocean, far and wide,
Heaves on the beach its never-failing tide,
Surges and foams for miles along the coast,
Till to the sight, the snowy fringe is lost.

Here the proud Spaniard came, for land and gold,
And came the buccaneers, of English mould,
They, on this sea, for Spanish galleons sought,
And for their capture, many a battle fought.

The poor Franciscan friar, also came,
But not with devastating sword and flame,
He, by his teaching, and example too,
Preach'd only peace, and show'd men what to do.

O'er land and sea, where'er we look around,
The view embrac'd is all historic ground.

Though on the rocky shore the billow raves,
Amid the breakers, rocks and caves,
Where in repose, yon ships their courses keep,
Still'd are the thunders of the mighty deep;
The winds are hush'd, the waters are at rest,
And a dead calm prevails o'er Ocean's breast;
And silent is the white-winged sea-birds' cry,
And lost to ear his evening lullaby.

As looking to the north, we throw our glance
Across the land and waters great expanse,
There frowning cliffs that rise above the bay,
Resplendent shine, bath'd in the solar ray,
And many an inlet deep, and hill, and fell,
Where Tamalpais stands as sentinel.

Phoebus now sinks behind the Marin hills,
With golden lustre, all the sky he fills;
Soon fade the roseate colors on the sight,
And disappear before approaching night;
Yet on the dark'ning world benignly streams,

A chasten'd light from Cynthia's modest beams,
 There, in the vaulted canopy afar,
 With mild effulgence, shines the evening star.

In vain the painter would attempt to limn.
 And vain the poet, to essay in rhyme,
 A just description of what he surveys,
 Or on such scene bestow its meed of praise.

Who loves the beautiful, will hither hie,
 His intellectual tastes to gratify;
 From studies, such as these, he'll surely find
 Imparted health to body and to mind.
 Oft shall fond memory recall the past,
 And dwell on visions all too bright to last,
 And Thought revert to those delicious hours,
 So sweetly spent among the trees and flowers.

All are made welcome to this wide domain,
 With naught their pleasures to restrain;
 To rich and poor the spacious grounds are free,

Thanks to the Man of Liberality,
Who spends a princely fortune for the weal,
Of thousands, who to him, most grateful feel;
Long life and honor be his just reward,
For all the happiness he doth afford.

Lord of the Manor, he, who thus confers
A public boon, which gratitude bestirs
In all who visit and enjoy delights,
Such as are only found on Sutro Heights.





